

Carlisle School Committee
Minutes
March 19, 2008
Ruth C. Wilkins Library, Robbins Building
6:15 PM

Present – School Committee: Nicole Burkel, Chair; Wendell Sykes, Vice Chair; Dale Ryder; Michael Fitzgerald, Chad Koski.

Present – School Administration: Marie Doyle, Superintendent; Heidi Zimmerman, Business Manager; Jim Halliday, Principal; Patrice Hurley, Principal; Karen Slack, Director of Student Support Services; Claire Wilcox, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Nicole Burkel called the meeting to order at 6:21 pm.

Michael Fitzgerald made a motion to enter executive session to discuss a contract issue. The meeting will re-open following the executive session. Mr. Koski seconded the motion Members voted in favor as follows: Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Mr. Koski, yes; Ms. Ryder, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes.

The regular meeting resumed at 7:10 pm

School Choice Public Hearing

Ms Burkel opened the public hearing on School Choice. She read the following statement about Choice:

Beginning in September 1994, every city, town or regional school district is required to enroll non-resident students under the school choice program, unless the school committee votes prior to June 1 not to participate. The section of the law states in part, *" . . . this obligation to enroll non-resident students shall not apply to a district for a school year in which its school committee, prior to June first, after a public hearing, adopts a resolution withdrawing from said obligation, for the school year beginning the following September."*

Discussion followed regarding Carlisle's participation in the program.

Alex Krapf suggested that consideration be given to School Choice for grades in which enrollment is low.

Don Rober of Rutland Street asked for clarification of the finances involved in Choice. Ms. Doyle read the section of the law dealing with costs. The maximum reimbursement

for a regular education student is \$5000. Special education student reimbursement is calculated based on the education plan of the student.

Mr. Sykes asked if applicants could be refused under Choice. We can define the number of openings at specific grade levels but cannot specify regular ed or special ed students. Once students were admitted we are obliged to keep them in the Carlisle School for the rest of their K – 8 education.

Mr. Fink asked if any of our classes could accommodate additional students. Ms. Burkel reviewed enrollment figures and stated that our classes are already at capacity.

A vote will be taken on Carlisle's participation in School Choice at the next meeting.

Public Comment Period

Ms. Burkel welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked if any members of the public had comments. There were no comments.

Ms. Burkel asked the faculty present to introduce themselves. Mike Miller, Steve Bober, and Sandy Kelly were present.

Review of minutes

Mr. Koski made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 4, 2008. Ms. Ryder seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the minutes, except Mr. Sykes who was not present at the meeting.

Communications/Correspondence

The following items were reviewed:

- Letter sent by David Flannery to school facility users to inform them of the April 2nd discussion regarding facility use fees
- Letter from Heidi Zimmerman requesting that her son be allowed to attend Kindergarten in Carlisle next year
- MSBA enrollment questionnaire
- Report on Applying Agreed-upon Procedures Over Compliance Applicable to MA School Districts' End-of-Year Pupil and Financial Report
- Notice from EDCO regarding two School Committee Leadership Roundtables

- Letter from Ginny Lamere to the School Committee regarding her concerns about the potential loss of the technology specialist next year
- MASC March Bulletin

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Marie Doyle reported on the following:

- CEF grant funds to be voted at the next meeting:
 - Mac lab with 25 laptops
 - 3 electronic whiteboards
- Middle School Choir at the MMEA conference on March 28
- UMass Lowell Design Lab after-school program
- Presentation at the New England World Language Chairs Seminar
- Meeting at Minuteman with Ed Bouquillon, new superintendent
- Gleason Library student art show
- Summer school STEM program

Administrator Reports

Director of Student Services Karen Slack represented the Administrative Team and reported on the following:

- Intramural floor hockey
- Parent conferences and report cards
- Family math games night
- MCAS testing begins next week with ELA
- DARE graduation
- Student Council school spirit day
- Mentor meetings
- Organizational review subcommittee meetings
- Pi day

Members'/Committee Reports

Mr. Fitzgerald reported on recent meetings and activities of the Regional School Committee. The superintendent search is ongoing and one internal candidate has applied for the position. Budget discussions continue regarding current year budget problems.

Mr. Sykes reported on the School Building Committee. They are currently working on a timeline for the process. Mr. Sykes also stated that he has resigned from the School Building Committee for personal reasons.

Ms. Burkel reported on meetings of the EDCO School Committee group and informed committee members about two upcoming meetings.

Ms. Ryder stated that the Highland subcommittee is making process and that the committee will be prepared to make a report to the Selectmen

Information/Discussion Items

- A. **Social studies curriculum presentation.** Sandy Kelly, Social Studies Coordinator and School Library/Media Specialist thanked members for the opportunity to discuss the social studies curriculum. She then gave an overview of the program, highlighting new activities during the current year.

She stated that this May there would be an official MCAS test in social studies for the first time, following pilot tests last year. She described the topics to be covered on the grade 5 test. She stated that our benchmarks cover these topics as they follow the state guidelines.

Ms. Burkel suggested that it would be interesting for our Middle School students to attend Town Meeting or to hold a mock Town Meeting.

Ms. Kelly stated that she has been discussing the voting process with faculty and may try to bring in voting booths to the school for a mock election next fall. The focus this year for Social Studies has been to enhance the curriculum in grades 3, 4, and 5. She reviewed the projects underway in those grades.

- B. **Livable Carlisle community (LCC).** Marj Stickler and Cathy Coyle of the Livable Carlisle Community group updated members on activities of the group, including a planned community forum planned for April 5th. They described the function of the group, which began about a year ago. They distributed copies of the mission statement, which indicates that they are a group of citizens who want to support vitality and connectedness in the present Carlisle community that will have stability within projected demographic and economic stresses.

Ms. Stickler and Ms. Coyle are members of the steering committee for LCC. Their goal is communication and joint planning, which would include both citizens and town boards. They described some of the work done so far through meetings and surveys. An overwhelming desire of the town seems to be the establishment of a gathering or meeting place and they would like to involve the community in an ongoing forum about the future of Carlisle and community planning.

They asked that members contact them with any questions or thoughts they might have. Mr. Sykes stated that providing in-home services is something

that enhances the quality of life and is economically sound and suggested that LCC look into something of this nature particularly as citizens age.

- C. **DCAP – District Curriculum Accommodation Plan.** Patrice Hurley reviewed the DCAP. This plan is required by MA general law and is intended to guide principals and teachers to ensure that all efforts have been made to meet student needs in general education classrooms. The DCAP supports teachers in accommodating the wide range of student learning styles and needs that exist in schools. The School Council has been working with Ms. Hurley on the plan, along with teachers and administrators.

Ms. Hurley highlighted several areas of the DCAP and indicated that it is a tool for teachers to support students who have issues accessing the general education curriculum. It provides strategies for teachers to use in supporting students and describes some of the programs in place to provide opportunities for students who need extra help. Ms. Hurley then gave some examples of specific strategies that might be used to help students.

Members commented on the thoroughness of the plan. Ms. Burkel suggested that it be posted on the school website.

- D. **Bullying survey/student leadership program evaluation report.** Ms. Hurley discussed a bullying survey done earlier in the year and discussed the procedures in place to reduce bullying at CPS to the lowest possible level. She stated that the most recent survey showed a reduction of 10% in bullying incidents. It also showed that most bullying occurs in less supervised areas such as in the halls, on the playground and on buses. She stated that efforts to eliminate bullying continue through Open Circle, Second Step, CRAFTY program, and Advisory Groups. Outreach efforts are also encouraged through leadership projects such as coin and coat drives and fund raising. She also described some of the work occurring among staff in team meetings to enhance anti-bullying efforts and foster student leadership.

She described the survey done and stated that the survey had some weaknesses including the fact that it did not include a definition of bullying and didn't distinguish between one and several incidents. An improved survey will be used in the future.

Ms. Hurley distributed a report to members, which included additional details regarding programs and team efforts. She reviewed six basic strategies outlined in the book Schools Where Everyone Belongs by Stan Davis. She further discussed the protocol used by principals in handling bullying incidents. The standard protocol includes four steps:

- Student reflection form
- Principal and student review of the reflection form

- A call home
- Possible activation of the rubric

Ms. Ryder asked if principals do proactive identification of students who might be bullied or be bullies. Ms. Hurley stated that they do not target students, but are aware of children who are at risk and discuss situations involving these students at the weekly Nursing, Administration, Guidance group.

Ms. Ryder asked if all students had participated in the bullying survey, and Ms. Hurley stated that they had. She further noted that the emphasis on bullying prevention has been a focus for superintendent Marie Doyle.

Ms. Burkel asked if this information would be presented to the CSA. Ms. Hurley reported that this would be done tomorrow.

- E. **MSBA building project Initial Compliance Certificate.** Lee Storrs spoke for the School Building Committee. He distributed a draft timeline for the project. The Selectmen have expanded the membership of the SBC to 13 members. Updated enrollment statistics have been submitted to the MSBA. Mr. Storrs presented an initial Certificate of Compliance for review by members. The Certificate will have to be eventually signed by the School Committee Chair, Selectmen, and Superintendent. Any comments regarding the Certificate should be sent to Madonna McKenzie. The Certificate will be placed on the next agenda for further review and potential approval.

Mr. Storrs stated that the Selectmen have approved a warrant article to transfer \$25,000 from free cash to bring on an operations project manager (OPM) for the building. He discussed what the role of the OPM would be throughout the project. Members thanked Mr. Storrs and the SBC for their work.

- F. **Current year budget update.** Heidi Zimmerman, School Business Manager, noted that the budget would be frozen in the next few weeks and that she would have a detailed report at an upcoming meeting. At the present time teachers are ordering materials for the remainder of the year.
- G. **2009 Budget.** Details of next year's budget are still being worked out and there is no additional information to be presented at this time. Ms. Doyle noted that she has been talking with the CSA about filling some of the gaps in the supply budget for next year due to budget cuts.

Action Items

- A. **Vote School Calendar for 08-09.**

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the school calendar for school year 2008 – 2009 as reviewed at the March 5th meeting. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

- B. Vote Facility Use Policy. Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the revised Facility Use Policy, #06.02.1998, and note the revision date of March 19, 2008 on the document. Ms. Ryder seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.**

It was noted that this approval does not affect the current fee schedule, which will be discussed at the April 2nd meeting.

Other Business

Ms. Burkel asked to have an electronic copy of Mr. Flannery's fee analysis included in the packet for the next meeting.

Citizens' Comments

Ms. Burkel asked if any members of the public would like to comment on meeting agenda items.

Nancy Cowan of Russell Street commented that it would be a good idea to have an inventory of technology equipment and feels that recent technology discussions have been somewhat haphazard. She would like the SC to review the technology already on campus before accepting the Carlisle Education Foundation donation.

Alex Krapf of Ice Pond Road commented on the total cost of ownership of technology. He stated that he has read that initial new equipment costs represent only about 40% of the total cost of ownership of the electronic equipment.

Mr. Krapf stated that he has seen great response from the school regarding a bullying incident, but that the bullying had been going on for some time before those in charge knew about it.

Mr. Krapf suggested that there might be a more formal mechanism for dealing with gifted children similar to the DCAP for children with particular needs.

Ms. Sorn questioned a section in the DCAP referring to the sharing of information.

Adjournment

There was no additional business, and **Mr. Sykes made a motion to adjourn the meeting to executive session to continue discussion of a contract issue. Ms. Ryder seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor as follows:**

Ms. Ryder, yes; Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Koski, yes.

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent